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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Tokelau

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 10 January 2013. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

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The Territory at a glance

Territory: Tokelau is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter administered by New Zealand.

Representative of administrative Power: Administrator Jonathan Kings.

Geography: Tokelau comprises three small atolls: Fakaofo, Nukunonu and Atafu. Each atoll comprises strips of land up to 200 m wide and not more than 5 m above sea level. Samoa, located 480 km to the south, is the nearest sizeable neighbour and the principal point of contact for Tokelau with the outside world.

Land area: 12.2 km².

Exclusive economic zone: 318,990 km².[a]

Population: 1,411 (October 2011 census), as follows: Atafu — 482, Fakaofo — 490, Nukunonu — 397 and Samoa — 42 (Tokelau Public Service employees and their immediate families). Over 6,800 Tokelauans live in New Zealand. As New Zealand citizens, Tokelauans may also reside in Australia.

Ethnic composition: Tokelauans are Polynesians with linguistic, family and cultural links with Samoa.

Languages: Tokelauan. English and Samoan are also widely used.

Capital: None. Each atoll has its own administrative centre.

Head of territorial Government: Ulu-o-Tokelau. The position rotates among the leader of each atoll on an annual basis.

Main political parties: None.

Elections: Held in January every third year. The next election is due to be held in January 2014. Representation in the General Fono currently stands at Atafu (7 delegates), Nukunonu (6) and Fakaofo (7).

Legislature: The unicameral General Fono, a 20-member legislature.

Economy: The principal source of revenue is assistance provided by New Zealand. Additional revenue is generated by fisheries licence fees and sales of copra, postage stamps, souvenir coins and handicrafts.

Monetary unit: New Zealand dollar ($NZ).

Gross domestic product per capita: US$ 1,007 (2001-2008 estimates).

Brief history: Originally inhabited by Polynesians from surrounding islands, Tokelau became a British protectorate in 1889, and in 1925, administration was transferred to New Zealand. By the Tokelau Act 1948, sovereignty over Tokelau was transferred to New Zealand.

[a] Exclusive economic zone data from J. D. Bell, J. E. Johnson and A. J. Hobday, *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change* (Noumea, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2011). Available from www.spc.int/climate-change/fisheries/assessment/e-book.

I. Constitutional and political developments

A. Local self-governance

1. As reported in previous working papers on the question of Tokelau (see A/AC.109/2001/5, A/AC.109/2002/6, A/AC.109/2003/10, A/AC.109/2004/8, A/AC.109/2005/3, A/AC.109/2006/10, A/AC.109/2007/11, A/AC.109/2008/1, A/AC.109/2009/2, A/AC.109/2010/3, A/AC.109/2011/3 and A/AC.109/2012/1), the current process of constitutional development stems from the 1998 decision by the General Fono (the national representative body of Tokelau) to endorse a comprehensive report entitled "Modern house of Tokelau", which addressed the core issue that faced Tokelau in creating a constitutional framework that suited an atoll- or village-based self-governing community that respected traditional decision-making customs.

2. In accordance with the terms of the 1998 "Modern house of Tokelau" report, General Fono delegates are now elected on the basis of proportional village representation with delegates elected through universal village suffrage, rather than a system of equal village representation with delegates appointed by the respective Village Councils, as was previously the case. In 2004, further decisions were made on the method of appointment of the Chair of the General Fono and on the role and responsibilities of the six-person Council of Ongoing Government, which is the executive Government when the General Fono is not in session. The Council consists of three Faipule (representative of each village) and three Pulenuku (mayor of each village). The position of Ulu-o-Tokelau, or Head of Government, rotates annually among the three Faipule. The position was held in 2012 by the Faipule for Atafu. In February 2012, the Faipule for Atafu took over as Ulu. In February 2013, the Faipule for Nukunonu is expected to rotate into the position.

3. Since 2004, the three Village Councils have taken full responsibility for all village public services. That decision emanated from the Modern House of Tokelau approach, whereby the traditional Council of Elders on each atoll should serve as the foundation for any future governance structure. Under that arrangement, the three Village Councils would delegate authority to the General Fono for activities that needed to be handled at the national level (see A/AC.109/2005/3). The New Zealand official with principal responsibility for relations with Tokelau is the Administrator of Tokelau, who is based in Wellington and is appointed by the New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs.

4. Jonathan Kings is the current Administrator of Tokelau and works from within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in the Special Relations Unit, which is responsible for New Zealand's relationship with Tokelau (as well as with Niue). The Unit is staffed by officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. A member of the Tokelau Public Service works in the Office of the Administrator.

5. In September 2012, the Council for the Ongoing Government of Tokelau adopted the Devolution Review, which focused on the results of a study commissioned by Tokelau on how devolution of power to villages has worked in practice, and considered the interface between villages, departments and the leadership of Tokelau and between Tokelau and New Zealand. The Review was referred back to the villages in October 2012 for further discussion in February 2013.

B. Referendum process

6. In 2003, the General Fono took a formal decision, with the support of all three Village Councils, to "endorse self-government in free association with New Zealand as the choice to be actively explored with the New Zealand Government". In August 2005, the General Fono approved a draft constitution as the basis for the proposed act of self-determination, as well as the text of a draft treaty of free association between Tokelau and New Zealand. In November 2005, the New Zealand Cabinet gave its formal approval. The so-called "referendum package", consisting of the draft treaty and the draft constitution, was to form the basis for the referendum on self-determination. In line with a decision by the General Fono, an overall majority of two thirds of the valid votes cast was required for a change to the status of Tokelau.

7. The first referendum on self-determination was held sequentially in Apia and on the three atolls from 11 to 15 February 2006 (see A/AC.109/2006/20). The outcome of the referendum fell short of the required two-thirds majority, with 60 per cent of valid Tokelauan votes cast in favour of self-government in free association with New Zealand. The United Nations, which formally monitored the referendum, deemed the process credible and reflective of the will of the people of Tokelau. A representative of the Special Committee on Decolonization accompanied by a Political Affairs Officer of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat also observed the referendum process.

8. In August 2006, the General Fono voted to hold a second referendum on Tokelauan self-determination in late 2007. The proposed constitution and the draft treaty, commonly referred to as the self-determination package, were to be the same and the legal threshold for acceptance of the proposal would remain at a two-thirds majority.

9. The second referendum was held from 20 to 24 October 2007. The result, with 64.4 per cent in favour, was again below the two-thirds threshold, thereby leaving the status of the Territory unchanged (see A/AC.109/2007/19). As with the first referendum, the United Nations formally monitored the voting, with representatives of the Special Committee on Decolonization and the Department of Political Affairs present as observers.

10. Following the results of the second referendum, the General Fono requested the Government of New Zealand to keep on the table the entire self-determination package (namely, the draft treaty and draft constitution that had been agreed upon and had served as the foundation for the previous ballots). The Council for the Ongoing Government noted that Tokelau could in the future change the two-thirds majority threshold for the referendum, but should put in place measures to ensure that a threshold was supported by a clear majority in each village to guarantee unity. The Council for the Ongoing Government also noted Tokelau's strong commitment to self-determination and its wish to have a constitution, albeit one that did not encompass the free association self-government provisions.

11. The outcomes of the referendums, neither of which reached the threshold of support set by Tokelau's General Fono for a change of status, have been acknowledged and accepted by New Zealand. As a follow-up to the 2007 referendum result, the then Prime Minister of New Zealand met with Tokelau's leaders in February 2008 to discuss the next steps in the New Zealand-Tokelau relationship. It was agreed that a "pause" should be taken in Tokelau's self-determination efforts

and that in the meantime Tokelau would focus on meeting its basic needs. This remains the situation.

II. Economic conditions

A. General economic overview

12. Tokelau faces major constraints on its economic growth, including such natural disadvantages as small size, isolation, wide spread of the atolls, lack of natural resources and natural disasters (such as cyclones). Tokelau's economic stability has so far been made possible by the high levels of assistance provided by the administering Power. With the continued assistance of New Zealand, the Council for the Ongoing Government of Tokelau intends to maintain its focus on implementing various priority projects relating to infrastructure, the delivery of core services and shipping; developing the villages; and strengthening the General Fono, the Council for the Ongoing Government of Tokelau and the Tokelau Public Service.

13. Tokelau has a unique combination of traditional and modern income resource streams. With Government funding, many villagers are paid regularly for various village duties ranging from construction and boat-loading to assistance to the General Fono and other public entities. As part of the new Tokelau Fisheries Policy aimed at maximizing the economic benefits from the sustainable use of its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), Tokelau joined the Vessel Day Scheme, a mechanism allowing vessel-owners to purchase and trade days fishing at sea in places subject to the Nauru Agreement. The scheme is used to constrain and reduce catches of target tuna species and increase the rate of return from fishing activities through access fees paid by distant water fishing nations. At the request of Tokelau, the Administrator has completed all formalities in order to manage the EEZ for the next three years, until Tokelau can take this over.

14. Traditional and communal values and practices play a key role in contributing to a state of general well-being and equity in the Territory, as evidenced by the *inati* system and the importance attached to upholding the concept of the family and/or the extended family. The tradition of *inati* requires the deposit at a central location of food and produce, which are then apportioned by the distributors on the basis of "share groups". The principle provides for a secure distribution system that addresses the needs of every member of the community, including the elderly, widows, single parents and children.

B. Assistance by the administering Power to Tokelau

15. In 2011, New Zealand and Tokelau signed a Joint Commitment for Development which sets out joint priorities for the following five years. The focus for development assistance remains securing a viable transport solution, developing a strong fisheries resource and improving health and education standards. Both Tokelau and New Zealand have reaffirmed their commitment to activities and projects that can be viably established and maintained.

16. Assistance is provided through budget support and through specific projects. New Zealand's budget support for Tokelau for the 2012/13 financial year is $NZ 11.7

million. This represents a drop from $NZ 14 million in 2011/12 to cover Tokelau's contribution to the cost of chartering the *PB Matua* vessel. Key projects include transport (charter of the *PB Matua* and the design of a long-term shipping solution to be put to tender in 2013); renewable energy; and ship-to-shore equipment and infrastructure. Taking into account budget support and specific projects, total funding for 2012/13 is estimated to be in the vicinity of $NZ 17 million.

17. The Tokelau International Trust Fund, formally established in November 2004, is designed to provide intergenerational security and an independent source of income to Tokelau in the future. With contributions from Australia, New Zealand, Tokelau and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the level of the Fund now stands at approximately $NZ 74 million (estimated 2012/13 figures).

C. Transport and communications

18. Tokelau has no airstrips and its main transportation option is provided by regular passenger and cargo services between Apia and Tokelau, primarily on the *PB Matua*, which was chartered by the Administrator of Tokelau in 2012. Additional charters by larger vessels are occasionally funded to meet Tokelau's transport needs. Recognizing that the quality of the transport service linking Tokelau's atolls and providing contact with Samoa lies at the heart of its ongoing viability, New Zealand, as the administering Power, has committed to implementing a total transport solution that will meet Tokelau's transport needs. Planning for a new vessel that will meet Tokelau's needs for the longer term has been initiated. The feasibility of providing seaplane service to Tokelau is also being examined, since issues over limited land availability are making the provision of an airstrip a longer-term plan.

19. The ongoing development of Tokelau's infrastructure and maintenance of existing facilities is a major facet of relations between Tokelau and New Zealand. Decisions on the prioritization of projects rest with the Government of Tokelau, both at the public service level and the Village Council level.

20. For more than a decade, large investments have been made to facilitate Tokelauan contacts, both inter-atoll and with the outside world. The Telecommunications Tokelau Corporation was established in 1997. A website (www.dot.tk) became operational in January 2002 and offers both free and paid domain names. The website is the result of a commercial licensing agreement between the Corporation and a private company, Taloha Inc. Pursuant to a request from the atolls, the Corporation began to install new equipment in the atolls in 2009 to boost telecommunication services in the villages and to assist in creating Internet-based long-distance education opportunities.

21. The radio stations inaugurated in 2002 are seen as an excellent means of maintaining the Territory's cultural heritage, and facilitating communication and transparency on community and decision-making matters, since they broadcast meetings of the Council of Elders on each atoll.

D. Power supply

22. In 2012, Tokelau became the first renewable nation in the world, following the completion of the Tokelau Renewable Energy Project, funded by the Government of New Zealand. A renewable energy system comprising a large array of solar panels, home solar panels, solar hot-water systems and generators running on biofuel derived from coconut oil was installed, making Tokelau almost entirely reliant on renewable energy for its electricity supply.

23. As a Pacific Island highly influenced by climate change, Tokelau sees its lead in renewable energy as an example to the developed world. It is expected that the country will generate savings on diesel of around $NZ 1 million per annum once the funding for the Tokelau Renewable Energy Project ($NZ 7 million) advanced by New Zealand is repaid.

III. Social conditions

A. General

24. In May 2012, Statistics New Zealand and the Tokelau Statistics Unit released the final outcome of the five-yearly population census held on 18 October 2011. The main findings of the 2011 Tokelau Census of Population and Dwellings are reflected in the following paragraphs.

25. Three population counts or concepts were used: the de jure usually resident population (used for distributing funds to the atolls); the usually resident population present in Tokelau on census night; and the census night population. The final results show a de jure population (comprising the usually resident population present in Tokelau on census night and the usually resident absentee subpopulation) of 1,411. This figure compares with the final 2006 Tokelau census population count of 1,466 people, representing a decrease of 3.8 per cent.

26. Nationally, considering the de jure usually resident population, the sex ratio is relatively balanced, at 99 males to 100 females. However, Nukunonu presents a higher ratio of 127. Most of Tokelau's people are under 30 years of age. The median age for people usually living in Tokelau on census night is 24 years, compared with 35.9 years in New Zealand. The age-sex distribution of the de jure usually resident population suggests that people in the 25 to 34 year age group are more mobile (leaving Tokelau for better conditions) than other people. The country's fertility patterns show a higher crude birth rate of 22.5 per 1,000 in Tokelau compared with that of New Zealand (14 per 1,000) and similar to that of Samoa (23 per 1,000).

27. A total of 268 people were recorded as absentees, representing 23.4 per cent of the usually resident population present in Tokelau on census night. The most common reason for absence was study abroad.

28. The major population trends and sociocultural characteristics were identified, when comparing the 2006 and 2011 population censuses. The proportion of the population born in Tokelau decreased from 75.8 per cent in 2006 to 62.1 per cent in 2011. While Tokelauan and English are the most widely spoken languages, the proportion of people able to speak Tokelauan dropped from 96.1 per cent in 2006 to 94.1 per cent in 2011. Remarkably, the percentage of the population able to converse

in Tuvaluan increased to 11.7 in 2011 (from 7.2 per cent in 2006). Regarding ethnic origin, the percentage of residents identifying only as Tokelauan dropped to 65.6 per cent from 73.7 in 2006 (and 88.8 per cent in 2001), while residents identifying themselves as being of Samoan origin only increased from 2.8 per cent in 2006 to 6.8 per cent in 2011.

29. The 2011 census used a special workforce concept, combining the unique characteristics of Tokelau with international standards. The developed model, taking into account the difficulty of applying the Western concept of unemployment, divides the workforce into two categories: those who are working (the labour force) and those who are not (the non-labour force). The census results show the percentage of the labour force who worked for pay, who carried out unpaid work, who did both paid and unpaid work, and those who did not work in the week before the census. Results are broken down by sex, age and for each atoll.

30. The 2011 Tokelau census also collected data on dwellings and households, ensuring comparability with international standards while adapting special methods to reflect local concepts such as the counting method used to collect information on the number of rooms in the main dwelling.

B. Education

31. Under Tokelau's compulsory education system, primary and secondary education is available to everyone up to the age of 16. There are three schools on Tokelau, one on each atoll. As one of the owners of the University of the South Pacific (USP), Tokelau has access to a distance-learning foundation course run by the University's educational telecommunications system through a USP campus located on Atafu. In spite of significant funding for education over many years, education standards on the atolls remain relatively low. This is a key reason why significant numbers of families leave the atolls to seek improved educational opportunities for their children in New Zealand, Samoa and elsewhere. A major infrastructure renewal programme is continuing in Tokelau, which includes the provision of new schools in Atafu and Fakaofo. Efforts have also been devoted to curriculum development, training of principals and senior staff and the extension of secondary schooling in 2009 to cover year 13.

32. The 2011 census as presented by Statistics New Zealand and the Tokelau Statistics Unit depicts important aspects of the development of the Territory's education in relation to school qualifications, reading and writing skills, broken down by age group, sex and atolls.

C. Health care

33. The provision of adequate health services to the populations of three dispersed atolls remains a major challenge for Tokelau. Each of Tokelau's atolls has a basic health centre, staffed and equipped to deliver core medical care and related services. Considerable attention and funding are devoted to this core area of Tokelau's needs. As part of a major infrastructure renewal programme, the health centre on Nukunonu is being substantially improved. Atafu and Fakaofo also have plans to improve their existing medical centres in the near future. Progress of the Infrastructure Development

Project was assessed in September 2012 by the designated Clerk of Works and problems with materials shortage are being addressed.

34. The major non-local sources of contributions to health care are the Government of New Zealand, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as the Government of Australia and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. The priorities of the national health plan, which is directly linked to the Tokelau National Strategic Plan 2010-2015 are: (a) healthy islands and communities; (b) healthy lifestyles; (c) development of health partnerships; (d) development of accessible primary health-care services; (e) successful community participation; and (f) development and improvement of the health-service system.

35. According to data from WHO, while the overall health status is reasonably good, changes have been observed in the past 20 years. Non-communicable diseases, namely overweight and obesity, are the major threat, with cerebrovascular and cardiovascular diseases being the leading causes of death. Obesity is common and is attributed to diet and physical inactivity. There is an observable diet shift away from local towards imported foods. Tobacco and alcohol consumption are relatively high among the adult population and more prominent in males. The estimated smoking prevalence among adults in 2011 was 43 per cent.

36. Tokelau has zero infant and maternal mortality owing to early referral. Antenatal care coverage and immunization coverage for child immunization is 100 per cent. Screening programmes are in place for early detection and treatment of important health issues (cervical cancer, breast screening). The proportion of the population with access to improved sanitation facilities is 93 per cent. Access to improved drinking-water sources is available to 97 per cent of the population.

37. In November 2012, WHO issued the *WHO Multi-Country Cooperation Strategy for the Pacific 2013-2017*, aimed at addressing the three common threats to the health of Pacific peoples. The strategy identifies common challenges in the Pacific, outlines steps to address them and identifies five priority areas. For the first time, technical cooperation with each of the countries and territories in the Pacific is described.

38. In the case of Tokelau, four strategic priorities for collaboration between WHO and the territorial Government were identified: reduce the effects of non-communicable diseases through a variety of interventions such as food import control, implementing the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and implementing the WHO package of essential non-communicable disease interventions; increase health sector focus on climate change, supporting the health sector in implementing health system strengthening activities to address key climate-sensitive health risks as part of a suite of climate change adaptations in Tokelau; develop human health resources for the future to ensure qualified staff for Tokelau's three atolls; and create sustainable policies for the retention and development of health workers to maintain adequate levels of staffing in the health programmes.

IV. External relations

39. As set out in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Principles of Partnership statement, Tokelau as a Non-Self-Governing Territory has insufficient international legal personality to enter into formal international legal obligations as a State in its own right. New Zealand is responsible for entering into any such obligations on behalf of Tokelau, after consulting with Tokelau as to its wishes. Tokelau participates in regional and international organizations in its own right to the extent that those organizations provide for such participation.

40. Tokelau is seeking to grow its engagement with regional and international organizations. Tokelau is a member of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Pacific Community Coastal Fisheries Programme, the Council of the University of the South Pacific, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. It holds observer status with the Pacific Islands Forum. In October 2005, Tokelau was admitted as an associate member of the Pacific Community Applied Geoscience Commission. Tokelau is also an associate member of WHO and of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and, in 2011, became an associate member of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In addition to its relationship with New Zealand, Samoa is an important bilateral contact for Tokelau. Tokelau attended the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012.

V. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of territorial Government

41. Speaking at the 2012 substantive session of the Special Committee on Decolonization, the Ulu-o-Tokelau said that since the conclusion of the agreement between the Governments of New Zealand and Tokelau, which noted, inter alia, that the issue of self-determination would be left aside for a while to focus on infrastructure development, Tokelau had worked on developmental programmes relating to its schools, hospitals, renewable energy, transport and communications. Transport remained a major issue since a shipping service was essential for the regular movement of passengers and goods between Tokelau and the outside world, as well as for the delivery of education and health-care services. Speaking on the subject of self-determination for Tokelau, he stressed that, at present that was secondary to infrastructure development. Before undertaking another self-determination referendum, it was necessary for the people of Tokelau to understand integration, independence, the particular features of free association, and relevant international experience, including that of Micronesia and the Caribbean countries. He praised the "generous and conscientious support" of the Government of New Zealand to "our small and remote country".

B. Position of administering Power

42. As the administering Power for Tokelau, New Zealand has continued to maintain and provide all appropriate support for Tokelau's efforts to determine the will of its people for a possible change of status. New Zealand is appreciative of the

inevitable resource and capacity constraints of Tokelau as a small atoll-based community and envisages long-term support for Tokelau. Successive Administrators and representatives of New Zealand to the United Nations have placed on record before the Special Committee and the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) full information about New Zealand's support for Tokelau on this issue. This attitude towards the needs and aspirations of the people of Tokelau has been favourably acknowledged by those Committees on many occasions.

43. Addressing the Special Committee on 22 June 2012, the representative of New Zealand stated that Tokelau continued to face a number of challenges posed by its geographical isolation and a population of only around 1,400. Transport issues had dominated New Zealand's engagement with Tokelau over the past two years. The Administrator had recently signed a $12 million contract for a two-year shipping charter service between Apia and Tokelau, and an environmental impact assessment was currently under way in Nukunonu atoll to inform further discussion on developing an airport. There was overexpenditure in the current year's budget, less progress than hoped for in key infrastructure projects and some safety concerns around the overloading of a passenger vessel. Much remained to be accomplished by Tokelau to ensure that core services were delivered for the people of each atoll and before conditions agreed for any future referendum could be seen to be met. It remained "a balancing exercise" for New Zealand between respecting Tokelau's wish for control of some of its affairs and New Zealand's need to ensure that its substantial assistance in Tokelau was used most effectively. The contributions of UNDP and WHO in assisting Tokelau were acknowledged.

44. Addressing the Fourth Committee on 11 October 2012, the representative of New Zealand stated that his country, as the administering Power of Tokelau, focused its efforts on providing for the core requirements of the persons living on the three atolls. He recalled that, prior to the 2006 and 2007 referendums, the leaders of both Tokelau and New Zealand had decided that there should be an appreciable period before another referendum was held. Meanwhile, New Zealand stood by the people of Tokelau and would support their continued development. In that regard, he reported on two recent successes, including a renewable energy project, that would meet at least 90 per cent of Tokelau's energy needs and serve as a model for other small islands seeking to break their dependence on imported fossil fuels. He noted that women were being trained to maintain the system, which was evidence of the changing role of women in Tokelau society and public life in general. The second success involved addressing Tokelau's short- and long-term transport needs.

C. Consideration of the question by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

45. Speaking before the Special Committee on Decolonization on 22 June 2012 and introducing the draft resolution on Tokelau also on behalf of Papua New Guinea, the representative of Fiji welcomed the progress made on the question of Tokelau and the decision that any future act of self-determination on the future of the Territory would be deferred.

D. Consideration of the question by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

46. Speaking before the Fourth Committee on 12 October 2012, the representative of Papua New Guinea, also speaking on behalf of Fiji, stated that in Tokelau, focus remained on the full implementation of the joint commitment for development between the Territory and New Zealand, which was an excellent example of cooperation among all parties. He noted that the decolonization process in Tokelau could serve as a model for other Non-Self-Governing Territories. While progressive efforts continued in the Territories of the Pacific, their needs and aspirations remained valid and dependent on all parties, including the United Nations, to achieve progress towards the eradication of colonialism.

E. Action taken by the General Assembly

47. At its 59th plenary meeting, on 18 December 2012, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 67/131 on the question of Tokelau.

48. Under the operative part of that resolution, the General Assembly:

1. *Acknowledges* the decision of the General Fono in 2008 that consideration of any future act of self-determination by Tokelau will be deferred and that New Zealand and Tokelau will devote renewed effort and attention to ensuring that essential services and infrastructure on the atolls of Tokelau are enhanced and strengthened, thereby ensuring an enhanced quality of life for the people of Tokelau;

2. *Welcomes* the progress made towards the devolution of power to the three taupulega (village councils) since 2004;

3. *Notes* that Tokelau and New Zealand remain firmly committed to the ongoing development of Tokelau for the long-term benefit of the people of Tokelau, with particular emphasis on the further development of facilities on each atoll that meet their current requirements;

4. *Acknowledges* the adoption by Tokelau of its National Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 and that the Joint Commitment for Development between Tokelau and New Zealand 2011-2015 will focus on a viable transportation arrangement, infrastructure development, human resources capacity and the strengthening of governance;

5. *Also acknowledges* the ongoing and consistent commitment of New Zealand to meeting the social and economic requirements of the people of Tokelau, as well as the support and cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme;

6. *Further acknowledges* Tokelau's need for continued support from the international community;

7. *Recalls* with satisfaction the establishment and operation of the Tokelau International Trust Fund to support the ongoing needs of Tokelau, and calls upon Member States and international and regional agencies to contribute to the Fund and thereby lend practical support to Tokelau in overcoming the problems of smallness, isolation and lack of resources;

8. *Welcomes* the cooperative attitude of the other States and territories in the region towards Tokelau and their support for its economic and political aspirations and its increasing participation in regional and international affairs;

9. *Calls upon* the administering Power and United Nations agencies to continue to provide assistance to Tokelau as it further develops;

10. *Welcomes* the actions taken by the administering Power to transmit to the Secretary-General under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations information regarding the political, economic and social situation of Tokelau;

11. *Also welcomes* the commitment of both Tokelau and New Zealand to continue to work together in the interests of Tokelau and its people;

12. *Further welcomes* the commitment of Tokelau, with the assistance of the administering Power, to the reduction in the use of fossil fuels, with the aim of meeting its electricity needs entirely through renewable energy by the end of 2012;

13. *Requests* the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to continue to examine the question of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Tokelau and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.

49. At the same meeting, the General Assembly also adopted resolution 67/134 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, paragraph 6 of which refers to Tokelau.